WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An information distributing method using a cable line for digital broadcasting, comprising:

an identification step for identifying a type of a printing apparatus to be connected to a set-top box of each user;

an obtaining step for obtaining data that should be printed for specific users;

a selection step for selecting a printer driver corresponding to said printing apparatus based on the identification information;

a generation step for generating, using said selected printer driver, print information that should be printed by said printing apparatus of the specific users from said obtained data that should be printed; and

a distribution step for distributing said generated print information to set-top boxes of the specific users via said cable line.

2. An information distributing method according to claim 1, wherein

said identification step identifies the type of said printing apparatus by recognizing a device ID of said printing apparatus to be notified by said set-top box via said cable line.

3.   An information distributing method according to claim 1, wherein

said set-top box transfers the distributed print information to the printing apparatus to be connected.

5

4.   An information distributing method according to claim 3, wherein

said set-top box separates a print information portion from said distributed information and decodes

10   it to original print information, and transfer said print information to said printing apparatus without displaying it on a monitor.

5.   An information distributing method according

15   to claim 1, further comprising:

a notification step for receiving a print end notice from said set-top box; and

a management step for registering and managing the fact that said print information is distributed to the

20   specific users in a distribution history if said print end notice is received.

6.   An information distributing method according to claim 1, wherein

25   said cable line is a two-way broad band communication network;

said distribution step distributes said print

information as distribution information together with broadcast information that should be outputted on a display to be connected to said set-top box of the user.

5

7.   An information distributing method according to claim 6, wherein

distribution information is separated into said print information and said broadcast information in

10   said set-top box, and said print information is transferred to said printing apparatus without being displayed on said display.

8.   An information distributing apparatus for

15   distributing information using a cable line for digital broadcasting, comprising:

identifying means for identifying a type of a printing apparatus to be connected to a set-top box of each user;

20   obtaining means for obtaining data that should be printed for specific users;

selecting means for selecting a printer driver corresponding to said printing apparatus based on the identification information;

25   generating means for generating, using said selected printer driver, print information that should be printed by said printing apparatus of the specific

users from said obtained data that should be printed;
and

distributing means for distributing said generated
print information to set-top boxes of the specific
5   users via said cable line.

9.   A control program to be executed in an
information distributing apparatus for distributing
information using a cable line for digital
10   broadcasting, said program comprising:

an identification step for identifying a type of a
printing apparatus to be connected to a set-top box of
each user;

an obtaining step for obtaining data that should
15   be printed for specific users;

a selection step for selecting a printer driver
corresponding to said printing apparatus based on the
identification information;

a generation step for generating, using said
20   selected printer driver, print information that should
be printed by said printing apparatuses of the specific
users from said obtained data that should be printed;
and

a distribution step for distributing said
25   generated print information to set-top boxes of the
specific users via said cable line.

10. A computer-readable storage medium storing a control program to be executed in an information distributing apparatus for distributing information using a cable line for digital broadcasting, wherein

5   the control program comprises:

an identification step for identifying a type of a printing apparatus to be connected to a set-top box of each user;

an obtaining step for obtaining data that should

10   be printed for specific users;

a selection step for selecting a printer driver corresponding to said printing apparatus based on said identification information;

a generation step for generating, using said

15   selected printer driver, print information that should be printed by said printing apparatuses of the specific users from said obtained data that should be printed; and

a distribution step for distributing said

20   generated print information to set-top boxes of the specific users via said cable line.

11. An information distributing method of distributing print information based on information

25   obtained via the Internet to specific users, comprising:

a management step for managing selection

conditions for selecting distribution information which are obtained from the specific users in advance;

a collection step for collecting distribution information that should be distributed to the specific users from the information obtained via the Internet based on said managed selection conditions;

a generation step for generating print information that should be printed by the specific users based on said collected distribution information; and

a distribution step for actively distributing said generated print information to the specific users.

12. An information distributing method according to claim 11, wherein

said management step further retains time information that designates a time when said print information should be distributed, and

said distribution step actively distributes print information at a time corresponding to said time information.

13. An information distributing method according to claim 12, wherein

said time information is based on a 24-hour system, and

said distribution step actively distributes said print information when the user local time reaches a

designated time.

14. An information distributing method according to claim 11, wherein

said distribution step distributes said print information to set-top boxes of the specific users using a cable line.

15. An information distributing apparatus for distributing print information based on information obtained via the Internet to specific users, comprising:

managing means for managing selection conditions for selecting distribution information which are obtained from the specific users in advance;

collecting means for collecting distribution information that should be distributed to the specific users from the information obtained via the Internet based on said managed selection conditions;

generating means for generating print information that should be printed by the specific users based on said collected distribution information; and

distributing means for actively distributing said generated print information to the specific users.

16. A control program to be executed in an information distributing apparatus for distributing

print information based on information obtained via the
Internet to specific users, said program comprising:

a management step for managing selection
conditions for selecting distribution information which
5   are obtained from the specific users in advance;

a collection step for collecting distribution
information that should be distributed to the specific
users from the information obtained via the Internet
based on said managed selection conditions;

10   a generation step for generating print information
that should be printed by the specific users based on
said collected distribution information; and

a distribution step for actively distributing said
generated print information to the specific users.

15

17.   A computer-readable storage medium storing a
control program to be executed in an information
distributing apparatus for distributing print
information based on information obtained via the
20   Internet to specific users, wherein

the control program comprises:

a management step for managing selection
conditions for selecting distribution information which
are obtained from the specific users in advance;

25   a collection step for collecting distribution
information that should be distributed to the specific
users from the information obtained via the Internet

based on said managed selection conditions;

a generation step for generating print information that should be printed by the specific users based on said collected distribution information; and

5   a distribution step for actively distributing said generated print information to the specific users.

18.   An information distributing method for distributing desired information to specific users,

10   comprising:

a receiving step for receiving selection conditions for selecting desired contents information from the specific users;

a selection step for selecting contents

15   information that should be distributed to the specific users out of contents information collected from a plurality of sites via the Internet based on said received selection conditions;

a generation step for laying out said selected

20   contents information collected from a plurality of sites as one file to generate distribution information; and

a distribution step for distributing said generated distribution information to the specific

25   users.

19.   An information distributing method according

to claim 18, wherein

the specific users are always connected for communication via a cable line, and

said distribution step actively distributes said

5   laid out information.

20.   An information distributing method according to claim 18, wherein

said selection step selects not only contents

10   information desired by the specific users but also

advertisement information and payment slip information.

21.   An information distributing method according to claim 18, further comprising:

15   a management step for managing said received

selection conditions in a user profile database, wherein

said user profile database manages individual information of users including addresses and ages.

20

22.   An information distributing apparatus for distributing desired information to specific users, comprising:

receiving means for receiving selection conditions

25   for selecting desired contents information from the

specific users;

selecting means for selecting contents information

that should be distributed to the specific users out of

contents information collected from a plurality of

sites via the Internet based on said received selection

conditions;

5   generating means for laying out said contents

information collected from a plurality of sites as one

file to generate distribution information; and

distributing means for distributing said generated

distribution information to the specific users.

10

23.   A control program to be executed in an

information distributing apparatus for distributing

desired information to specific users, said program

comprising:

15   a receiving step for receiving selection

conditions for selecting desired contents information

from the specific users;

a selection step for selecting contents

information that should be distributed to the specific

20   users out of contents information collected from a

plurality of sites via the Internet based on said

received selection conditions;

a generation step for laying out said selected

contents information collected from a plurality of

25   sites as one file to generate distribution information;

and

a distribution step for distributing said

generated distribution information to the specific users.

24. A computer-readable storage medium storing a control program to be executed in an information distributing apparatus for distributing desired information to specific users, wherein

the control program comprises:

a receiving step for receiving selection conditions for selecting desired contents information from the specific users;

a selection step for selecting contents information that should be distributed to the specific users out of contents information collected from a plurality of sites via the Internet based on said received selection conditions;

a generation step for laying out said selected contents information collected from the plurality of sites as one file to generate distribution information; and

a distribution step for distributing said generated distribution information to the specific users.

25. An information distributing method of distributing print information via a cable network for a digital broadcasting system to a user who has a set-

top box for transferring received print information to a connected printing apparatus, comprising:

a receiving step for receiving distribution information that should be distributed to a user

5   designated by an information distribution server;

a generation step for generating print information based on said received distribution information for each user; and

a distribution step for distributing said print

10   information generated for each user to said set-top box of the designated user utilizing said cable network.

26. An information distributing method according to claim 25, wherein

15   said distribution step distributes said print information after scrambling it.

27. An information distributing method according to claim 25, further comprising:

20   a step for receiving a notice of processing result of said print information from said set-top box; and

an update step for updating a distribution history of said distribution information if a print end notice of said print information is received form said set-top

25   box.

28. An information distributing method according

to claim 27, further comprising:

a notification step for notifying said information distribution server that a notice cannot be sent to a user if a print error notice is received from said set-

5   top box.

29. An information distributing method according to claim 25, wherein

said information distribution server is a server

10   of a bank that desires distribution of a use record as distribution information.

30. An information distributing apparatus for distributing print information via a cable network for

15   a digital broadcasting system to a user who has a set-top box for transferring received print information to a connected printing apparatus, comprising:

receiving means for receiving distribution information that should be distributed to a user

20   designated by an information distribution server;

generating means for generating print information based on said received distribution information for each user; and

distributing means for distributing said print

25   information generated for each user to said set-top box of the designated user utilizing said cable network.

31. A control program to be executed in an
information distributing apparatus for distributing
print information via a cable network for a digital
broadcasting system to a user who has a set-top box for
5   transferring received print information to a connected
printing apparatus, said program comprising:

a receiving step for receiving distribution
information that should be distributed to a user
designated by an information distribution server;
10   a generation step for generating print information
based on said received distribution information for
each user; and

a distribution step for distributing said print
information generated for each user to said set-top box
15   of the designated user utilizing said cable network.

32. A computer-readable storage medium storing a
control program to be executed in an information
distributing apparatus for distributing print
20   information via a cable network for a digital
broadcasting system to a user who has a set-top box for
transferring received print information to a connected
printing apparatus, wherein

the control program comprises:
25   a receiving step for receiving distribution
information that should be distributed to a user
designated by an information distribution server;

a generation step for generating print information

based on said received distribution information for

each user; and

a distribution step for distributing said print

5   information generated for each user to said set-top box

of the designated user utilizing said cable network.

33.   An information distributing method of

distributing advertisement information generated at an

10   advertisement company to a plurality of users to be

selected, comprising:

a management step for managing profile data of a

plurality of users using a database;

a receiving step for receiving selection

15   conditions for selecting specific users to whom the

advertisement information should be distributed;

a selection step for selecting the specific users

to whom the advertisement information should be

distributed based on said received selection conditions

20   and said managed profile data; and

a distribution step for distributing said

advertisement information to the selected specific

users utilizing a digital broadcasting system.

25   34.   An information distributing method according

to claim 33, further comprising:

a contents receiving step for receiving contents

information from an information providing server; and

a generation step for laying out and generating

distribution information based on said contents

information and said advertisement information, wherein

5   said distribution step distributes distribution

information including said contents information and

said advertisement information.

35.   An information distributing method according

10   to claim 33, further comprising:

a generation step for generating print information

based on said advertisement information for each of the

specific users, wherein

said distribution step distributes said generated

15   print information.

36.   An information distributing method according

to claim 33, further comprising:

a step for receiving a notice of processing result

20   of said print information from a destination; and

an update step for updating a distribution history

of said advertisement information if a print end notice

of said print information is received from said

destination.

25

37.   An information distributing method according

to claim 33, further comprising:

an advertisement management step for managing user

selection conditions as well as advertisement

distribution period information and advertisement genre

information received by said receiving means in an

5   advertisement attribute database by associating them

with said advertisement information.

38.   An information distributing apparatus for

distributing advertisement information generated at an

10   advertisement company to a plurality of users to be

selected, comprising:

managing means for managing profile data of a

plurality of users using a database;

receiving means for receiving selection conditions

15   for selecting specific users to whom said advertisement

information should be distributed;

selecting means for selecting the specific users

to whom said advertisement information should be

distributed based on said received selection conditions

20   and said managed profile data; and

distributing step for distributing said

advertisement information to the selected specific

users utilizing a digital broadcasting system.

25   39.   A control program to be executed in an

information distributing apparatus for distributing

advertisement information generated at an advertisement

company to a plurality of users to be selected, said program comprising:

a management step for managing profile data of a plurality of users using a database;

5   a receiving step for receiving selection conditions for selecting specific users to whom said advertisement information should be distributed;

a selection step for selecting the specific users to whom advertisement information should be distributed

10   based on said received selection conditions and said managed profile data; and

a distribution step for distributing advertisement information to the selected specific users utilizing a digital broadcast system.

15

40. A computer-readable storage medium storing a control program to be executed in an information distributing apparatus for distributing advertisement information generated at an advertisement company to a

20   plurality of users to be selected, wherein

the control program comprises:

a management step for managing profile data of a plurality of users using a database;

a receiving step for receiving selection

25   conditions for selecting specific users to whom advertisement information should be distributed;

a selection step for selecting the specific users

to whom advertisement information should be distributed

based on said received selection conditions and said

managed profile data; and

a distribution step for distributing said

5   advertisement information to the selected specific

users utilizing a digital broadcasting system.